



# CAVERSHAM THAMESIDE AND MAPLEDURHAM

ST PETER | ST MARGARET | ST JOHN

## **Equal Opportunities Policy Statement**

Signed by the Bishop of Oxford and the Chairman of the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance on 26 June 1999 and adopted by the PCC of Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham.

### **Theological Basis**

We believe that it is a fundamental Christian understanding to hold that all human beings are created in the image of God, that all are valued equally in God's love. We believe that God as our creator (Genesis 1.27) not only gave us life, but gave each person gifts to be used and developed. We believe that God longs for our well-being and fulfilment, and that we are all responsible to God for the way we treat each other. Unlawful and unfair discrimination between people is therefore contrary to God's purpose.

In the light of this Christian affirmation, and in recognition of our Lord's commandment that we should love our neighbours as ourselves, we declare our conviction that it is a Gospel imperative to realise the potential of all human gifts, and that failure to do so is an affront to the will of God.

### **A Pluralistic Society**

We recognise that Britain is a pluralistic society, diverse in race, culture, creed and interests. We are aware that individuals and groups of people are sometimes discriminated against, both directly and indirectly, in unjustifiable ways.

As a result we welcome the legislation, which aims to put this right, including:

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Disabled Persons (Employment) acts 1944 and 1958
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

This is an ongoing process. We will abide by new legislation as it is introduced.

### **Statement of Intent**

While recognising that there are currently some differences in conditions surrounding service between those who are lay or ordained, we will work to ensure that there is no discrimination on grounds of race, colour, nationality - including citizenship - or ethnic or

national origins, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religious or political affiliation, lay or ordained status, or any other respect which cannot be shown to be a necessary requirement of the job or office concerned.

We declare our intention to be an Equal Opportunities employer. We will work to ensure that in all appointments the priority will be to find the best person suited to a particular post. This does not conflict with the requirement that for some roles it will be necessary for the person to be a practising Christian, nor for the requirement that anyone directly employed by the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance should be in sympathy with the Christian approach and ethos.

Therefore we declare that it is our intention to ensure we provide:

- open recruitment, selection, training, consideration for promotion and fair treatment at work for those who are employed in a paid or voluntary capacity within our organisation
- access to membership of our councils, committees and other groups to all
- access to benefits, facilities and services, made available to all, without discrimination

We will ensure that no-one is disadvantaged in any of these matters by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable. Any justifiable condition must be lawful and will be made explicit in any situation, and the organisation will be ready to defend such action.

It is our intention to take positive action, within the law and as the law encourages, to ensure equality of opportunity and of treatment on the matters specified above details of which will be set out in a comprehensive policy document.

### **Implementation**

We look to all our staff and members of councils, boards, committees or groups appointed by us or on our behalf (whether paid or voluntary) to abide by and to promote this Policy.

We commend this policy to all other bodies associated with or supported by the Diocese of Oxford, including deaneries and parishes, and in so far as it lies within our power will ensure that it is accepted and implemented throughout our sphere of influence.

Because of legal requirements, we recommend that each body is urged to establish a monitoring procedure in accordance with the guidelines to ensure that employment practice conforms with the law.

We will monitor progress in the general implementation of the policy by ourselves and all other bodies concerned and report on it yearly in the Diocesan Annual Reports and Accounts.

Approved by PCC	December 2016
Review date	2019